

PACIFIC Regional Programme Results 2021

Total Budget Phase I	EU Contribution	UN Agency Contributions	Duration
 USD 7,835,932	 USD 7,077,830	 USD 758,102	2020 - 2023

Recipient UN organizations: UN Women, UNFPA, UNDP, UNICEF, IOM

Other partners: The Pacific Island Forum Secretariat (PIFS), The Pacific Community (SPC); National Legislatures, Ministries of Women, Health, Education, Youth and Sports, the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Tonga, RMI (Republic of Marshall Islands) Ministry of Health and Human Services, RMI Ministry of Culture and Internal Affairs, University of Melbourne, Nossal Institute, Fiji Broadcasting Corporation, and over 50 international, national, local, and grassroots civil society organizations (CSOs).

Context

In 2021, the regional Pacific Spotlight Initiative continued implementation in a very complex environment, grappling with compounding impacts of disasters from previous years and additional challenges. These include social and political unrest, fractured regionalism, rising food insecurity and increasingly severe and frequent natural disasters. The COVID-19 pandemic has worsened all risk factors for VAWG, including unemployment and increased poverty which further exacerbates gender inequality and patriarchal social norms.

Spotlight Initiative's Response

The programme recorded a number of significant results in 2021 and made significant strides strengthening women's movement through new partnerships with grassroots women's rights organizations, gaining political momentum in development and roll out of comprehensive sexuality education that is based on international best practices, as well regional mobilization of diverse stakeholders to roll out multi-sectoral standardized data systems for GBV data collection. The Spotlight Initiative actively participated in the Pacific Humanitarian Protection Cluster (PHPC), to coordinate humanitarian preparedness, response and recovery including issues on gender-based violence, psychosocial support, and gender and social inclusion mainstreaming. In 2021 it supported several emergency responses, as well as political unrest in Solomon Islands, by providing technical support to national protection coordination mechanisms.

Key Results

- ✓ **Increasing Pacific governments' leadership and effectiveness to implement domestic violence legislation** (Outcome 1, Legal and Policy): In partnership with the Pacific Community, the Spotlight supported the 14th Triennial Conference of Pacific Women and subsequent 7th Meeting of Pacific Ministers for Women which produced concrete action points requiring cooperation across all sectors of Pacific societies to end VAWG and resolved that governments and their partners need to act urgently. A specific recommendation dedicated to the ratification of ILO Convention C.190 on sexual harassment in the workplace was successfully negotiated by Women's Ministers in the Outcome Document.
- ✓ Progressing on the outcomes from the Ministerial meeting the Initiative supported the Pacific Community to convene the 2nd Regional Working Group on Domestic Violence (DV) Legislation, which convened 15 Pacific countries and launched the outcomes document recognizing the impact of COVID19 crisis on resourcing, availability, access, delivery, and efficiency of coordinated multi-sectoral DV essential services heightening the challenge of implementing of DV legislation.
- ✓ **Strengthening women's machineries to influence national resourcing for EVAWG initiatives** (Outcome 2: Institutions): Studies conducted and to be finalized in 2022 in Republic of the Marshall Islands (RMI), the Solomon Islands (SI), and Fiji, gathered evidence on the impact of DV on countries' economies. It highlighted direct and indirect costs of VAWG, and resources needed to make services available and accessible to individuals and their families. The findings of this study will inform governments' decisions on investments to address VAWG and inform CSOs' advocacy efforts for additional allocation of investments on gender issues.
- ✓ Alongside the costing studies in RMI and SI, Spotlight strengthened government entities and CSOs' capacity to understand the impact of VAWG in national economies, analyze needs and priorities of survivors, and integrate gender in financial tools. Both countries developed multisectoral action plans with specific recommendations and actions to strengthen gender mainstreaming in

key policy tools and utilize the findings of the costing research and budget analysis for advocacy. Gender-responsive budgeting efforts align with broader regional objectives and goals led by CROP agencies and other key stakeholders.

- ✓ To increase national budget allocations to EVAWG the Initiative engaged with Parliaments of Fiji, SI, and Vanuatu to enable Parliamentarians to hold gender informed debates, discussion and develop gender responsive budget analysis.
- ✓ **Transforming gender inequitable social norms and behaviors through engagement of adolescents and faith-based organizations** (Outcome 3: Prevention): The Pacific is witnessing a changing landscape in Comprehensive Sexuality Education, with growing political interest and national commitment. The Spotlight set the stage for a political tone that identifies with and values CSE to transform lives of young people with key decision makers and duty bearers supporting quality design and implementation of CSE needed to change existing gender inequalities and reduce VAWG. In partnership with the Ministries of Education CSE tools for in and out of school curricula were developed in Fiji, Kiribati, RMI, FSM, SI, and Tonga. Training of Master teachers trained in preparation for the nation-wide rollouts in 2022.
- ✓ Inclusion of faith-based leaders as advocates for EVAC as critical actors towards creating safe spaces for children across the Pacific. Developed Safe Church Policy detailing minimum commitments for Pacific churches to institutionalize these safe spaces, together with a Pacific faith-based EVAC toolkit for church leaders that will be used to develop and implement prevention strategies and activities within churches and church communities. Deep contextualization in RMI, SI and Fiji of policies and tools during 2021 have developed strong sense of ownership and sustained interest in continuing the movement on EVAC. Under lockdowns, church leaders also integrated EVAC into media campaigns on social media and TV targeting Christian populations. Which resulted in a significant change of stakeholders' spiritual role in protecting children from violence.
- ✓ **Strengthened comprehensive GBV data collection** (Outcome 5: Data): Significant strides have been made in the Pacific on GBV administrative and prevalence data collection standard setting, analysis, and dissemination. The establishment of a Regional Reference Group on GBV Administrative Data, as a core technical group brought together knowledge and is guiding the roll out of GBV Administrative Data systems in the Pacific countries. The programme contributed to regional thought partnership on the components of a national multi-sectoral GBV administrative data system with the support of SPC and the University of Melbourne and ensured data analysis processes integrate VAWG into related prevalence modules and surveys in Kiribati, Tonga, and Tuvalu. The Multiple Indicators Cluster Survey with Demographic Health Components MICS/DHS data collection and training tools were reviewed to develop templates for the ethical components of the population-based survey for prevalence. These tools will be included in the Pacific KnowVAWdata Hub available to Pacific countries when implementing a MICS/DHS with DV component.
- ✓ **Leaving no one behind through small grants** (Outcome 6: Women's Movement): The programme invested significantly on women's movement-building in the region by supporting diverse civil society organizations, including women-led and feminist organizations at the grassroots level. It directly partnered with over 50 national, local and grassroots women's rights organizations across 14 countries, solidifying new unique partnerships with those based closest to the communities. Small grants supported a wide range of activities including support to the LGTBQI+ community, vocational and financial training to women and survivors of GBV, awareness raising in menstrual hygiene solutions to reduce harassment of girls at school and awareness raising for gender-responsive disaster risk response.
- ✓ The programme partnered with DIVA (Diverse Voices and Action) for Equality and launched the regional Intersectional Advocacy capacity-building, networking and thought partnership hub for feminist, grassroots, and women's rights organizations.
- ✓ Additional 18 smaller civil society organizations across 10 countries were supported with Small Grants for work in the areas of COVID-19 advocacy for women and girls, GBV service delivery for rural and maritime communities, securing the safety of people of diverse sexual orientation and gender identity/LGBTQI+ and feminist climate justice.

The National Rugby League Tonga leads Voices Against Violence to address gender-based violence

Through the small grants mechanism, resources were allocated to strengthen the capacity of grassroots organizations in Tonga, such as the National Rugby League (NRL) – Tonga. Voices Against Violence (NRL) Tonga uses sport as a vehicle to address gender inequalities and raise awareness among young people about the impact of gender violence, making NRL Tonga an important advocate for the prevention of GBV among youth.

In their own words...

"This programme is important in empowering women so that they know their rights and they can do anything, and their voices need to be heard. It will help in stopping violence in our country. This programme helped me a lot. We've learned important things about violence." ~Amanaki, 14-year-old participant at the NRL Tonga Voices Against Violence workshop.